

Amendments to the Specification:

Insert new paragraph between paragraph 11 and 12

FIG. 1A is a schematic cross-sectional view of a marked shotgun cartridge according to one embodiment of the invention.

Please replace paragraph 18 with the following amended paragraph

In another particular embodiment, the identifier 29 may be placed on an external rim 28 of the head 18, so that the casing 14 may be identified. The casing 14 may be marked by any of the processes suited to marking metallic surfaces, as described above. In still another particular embodiment, the identifier 29 may be placed on the web 24 within the casing 14. Since the identifier 29 is deeply recessed within the casing 14, the identifier 29 is more resistant to tampering or alteration than if placed on the external rim 28 of the casing 14. The identifier 29 may be placed on the web portion 24 by a laser that projects a coherent beam into the casing 14 to form the mark either by discoloring a surface of the case material or by engraving the mark by selectively vaporizing the case material. Although FIG. 1 depicts a marked cartridge 10 that is configured for use in a long rifle or even a handgun, it is understood that the embodiments of the present invention are also applicable to other types of cartridges used in other types of firearms. For example, as shown in FIG. 1A, a cartridge 100 commonly used in shotguns includes an outer generally polymeric casing 140 that includes a propellant 150 located adjacent to a primer 20 positioned in a base end of the cartridge 100, a mass of generally spherically-shaped pellets 120 positioned at an opposing end of the cartridge 100, and a wad material 130 that is positioned between the shot 120 and the propellant 150 to moderate the effect of the acceleration forces on the pellets 120 when the propellant 150 is detonated. When the cartridge is discharged, the wad 130 and the shot 120 are ejected from the cartridge 100. Accordingly, therefore, and in another particular embodiment, the wad may be marked with the identifier 29 so that the recovered wad may be identified.